

Badimaya language

Badimaya (sometimes written **Badimia**) is an Australian Aboriginal language. It is a member of the Kartu subgroup of the Pama–Nyungan family, spoken by the Badimaya people.

Badimaya is a critically endangered language, spoken by only a handful of elderly Aboriginal people, all of whom are over 65 years of age.^[3] As of 2020 there is a language revival project researching and documenting the language.^[4]

Contents
Geographic distribution
Varieties
Typology
Grammar
 Pronominal system
Language resources
Notes
References
External links

Geographic distribution

Badimaya was traditionally spoken across a large region spanning Lake Moore, Ninghan Station, Paynes Find and Dalwallinu in the south, to Mount Magnet, Wynyangoo Station and Kirkalocka Station in the north

Today Badimaya people are found scattered across the Mid West region,^[a] based in regional towns and communities including Mount Magnet, Geraldton, Yalgoo, Mullewa, Meekatharra, Wubin, Dalwallinu and Perth.^[5]

Traditional Badimaya country is bordered by Western Desert language (Tjuparn, Wanmala) to the east, Noongar to the south-west and Wajarri to the north-west.

Varieties

Widi may have been another name for Badimaya, or for a particular variety of it.^[3]

Analysis of the lexicon and grammatical features of the language suggests that there were (at least) two varieties of Badimaya, a northern and southern variety. These varieties are unnamed; however, Badimaya speakers are aware of differences in the speech of Badimaya people from different regions of Badimaya country.

Typology

Badimaya is typologically fairly standard of Western Australian Pama-Nyungan languages. It has a phoneme inventory typical of Pama-Nyungan languages, with six places of articulation (showing both a laminal and apical contrast) and a three-way vowel system, with (limited) length-contrast.

Badimaya is a suffixing language with fairly free word order. It has a split-ergative case marking system, consistent with neighbouring languages. Unlike neighbouring languages however, Badimaya does not show evidence for a bound pronominal system.

Grammar

Pronominal system

Badimaya	
Native to	Australia
Region	Murchison area of Western Australia
Ethnicity	Badimaya, Widi
Native speakers	3 (2016) ^[1]
Language family	Pama–Nyungan - Kartu Badimaya
Dialects	Northern, Southern
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	bia
Glottolog	badi1246 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/badi1246) ^[2]
AIATSIS ^[3]	A14 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/A14)

Pronouns are of the form: person+number+case.^[6] The third person displays person allomorphy conditioned by number. There are morphological distinctions in the first and second person for the dual number, but this distinction is not found in the third person. The pronominal forms are listed below:

Personal pronouns^[6]

Person	Number	Absolutive	Accusative	Locative	Dative	Allative
1	Singular	ngadhu	ngadhunha	ngadhula	nganang	nganangudi
	Dual	ngalidya	ngalidyanha	ngalidyala	ngalidyang	
	Plural	ngalimi	ngaliminha	ngalimila	ngalimi	ngalimidi
2	Singular	nhundu	nhununha	nhundula	nhunung	nhunungudi
	Dual	nhuradya nhubadya nhubali	nhuranha	nhurala	nhubadyang nhurang	nhurangudi
	Plural	nhurami	nhuraminha	nhurangula		
3	Singular	balu	balunha	balula	balung	balungudi baludi
	Plural	dhanha	dhanhanha	danhala	danhung	dhanhungudi

There are two demonstrative pronouns a proximal (*nhinha*) and a distal (*banha*) which are declined as follows.^[6] The ablative case is formed by adding a suffix to both the ablative ending (*-ngun*) and the word *gardi* 'side'.^[6]

Demonstrative pronouns

Case	Proximate	Distal
	<i>nhinha</i>	<i>banha</i>
Absolutive	nhinha	banha
Ergative	nhinhalu	banhalu
Accusative	nhinhanha	banhanha
Dative	nhinhawu	banhawu
Locative	nhinhala	banhala
Allative	nhinhadi	banhadi
Ablative	nhinhagardi(ngun)	banhagardi(ngun)

There are four interrogative proforms, the nominal referring of which have case paradigms for the absolutive, ergative, locative and dative cases. The dative case has a possessive function.^[6]

Interrogative pronouns^[6]

	Absolutive	Ergative	Locative	Dative
ngana 'who'	ngana 'who'	nganalu 'who'		nganawu 'whose'
nha 'what'	nha 'what'	nhalu 'what'	nhala 'on what' nhangga 'when'	nhawu 'why'
wandi 'where/which'	wandi 'which/where'		wandila 'whereabouts'	
ya 'how'				

Language resources

The Bundiyarra Irra Wangga Language Centre (and previously the Yamaji Language Centre) has been carrying out work on the Badimaya language since 1993. A sketch grammar of Badimaya was published by Leone Dunn in 1988.^[7] An ebook dictionary of Badimaya words (created before 1995),^[8] an English/Badimaya dictionary (2014)^[9] and a wordlist (2014)^[10] and several children's books have already been published.^[7] Thanks to Mt Magnet elder Ollie George, the last fluent speaker of the language, with assistance from Irra Wangga, a significant language documentation work was carried out between the early 1990s and 2018.^[11]

An art and language project, *Nganang Badimaya Wangga*, was collaboratively produced in 2017 by the Irra Wangga Language Centre, with artists from Yamaji Art^[12] and Wirnda Barna Artists.^[13] The project produced a book of more than 20 stories of Ollie's life entitled *Nganang Badimaya Wangga: Yarns with Gami Ollie George*,^[14] a short video about Ollie by ABC Open Producer Chris Lewis, and an exhibition of the artworks created for the project.^[15]

Notes

- a. Traditionally the region is known as the Murchison.

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External links

- [Bibliography of Badimaya language and people resources \(http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/collections/language_bibs/badimaya_badimia.pdf\)](http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/collections/language_bibs/badimaya_badimia.pdf), at the [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](#)

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